Investment in Biotechnology

1468. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many investors are showing keen interest for investing on biopharmaceuticals, bioinformatics and bioservices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount of investment expected to get in the country during the next three years; and

(d) the investment that the biotechnology got since 1997; year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The industry is steadily recognising the potential of biotechnology applications including biopharmaceuticals, bioinformatics and bioservices, as per the survey conducted by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) during 2002. Several measures have been taken by the government for the promotion of biotech sector. The government of India has established Technology Development Board (TDB) and Pharmaceutical Research and Development Support Fund (PRDSF) under the Department of Science and Technology for providing soft loans to the entrepreneurs. There is specific expert group in the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) for identification and implementation of product and technology oriented research for promoting investment in the Biotech sector. Several foreign companies have also expressed interest in investing in India either for setting up a wholly owned subsidiary (WOS) or through joint ventures.

(c) The biotechnology sector is fast growing in the country and as per the publication of CII, it is estimated that approximately US $ four billion would be the market size by the year 2005, mainly in the areas of healthcare, agriculture, environment and

the food processing industries. Investment especially from private sector is expected to increase accordingly.

(d) The investment mainly from the Department of Biotechnology since 1997 for the promotion of biotechnology in the country is given below:

Year	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Expenditure *(Rs. in Crores)*	85.22	104.46	116.38	140.90	174.94

In addition, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Council of Medical Research, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Department of Science and Technology and other Ministries are also investing on specific projects and activities and on their autonomous institutions.

Fuel Cell Technology

1469. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 5243 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 9th May, 2003 and state:

(a) whether research work on various R&D aspects of fuel cell technology is being progressed towards their production on a commercial scale; and

(b) whether there is any co-ordination in this regard with other Government Ministries, especially Petroleum and Natural Gas, Road Transport and Highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) Yes, Sir. R&D efforts are being made to improve performance as well as to reduce the cost of the fuel cells, so that eventually they became cost effective and, therefore, commercialisable.

(b) Yes, Sir. Besides relevant ministries, some partners from public sector and private industries are also involved in the developmental efforts.